

Developed Nations



To: Negotiators for Developed Nations at UN World Climate Summit
Subject: Briefing on Negotiating Goals
Includes: USA, Canada, European Union, Japan, Russia and other former Soviet Republics, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand.

Goals

The Developed Nations seek to negotiate a global agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that achieves the best outcome for our economies and national interests, as well as for the world. At the 2015 UN climate negotiations in Paris, nations agreed to a goal of limiting global warming to “well below 2°C” compared to preindustrial levels. You must now decide on the following:

1. Actions to reduce CO₂ emissions, if any. Without action, your emissions are expected to grow over time. You can decide when emissions will stop growing, when they will begin declining, and at what annual rate emissions decline, if at all.
2. Whether to make a commitment to reduce deforestation or to increase reforestation or afforestation.
3. How much you will contribute, if at all, to the Green Climate Fund, which is intended to provide at least \$100 billion/year by 2020 for developing countries to reduce their emissions and adapt to climate change.

Context

The scientific consensus on climate is clear: over 97% of climate scientists agree that climate change is happening, that it is caused primarily by use of fossil fuels, and that the impacts could be devastating. Many developed countries are feeling the effects right now, from rising sea levels along coasts to heatwaves and prolonged droughts in agricultural regions.

Public Opinion

The public in our countries generally believes climate change is real and that human activity contributes significantly to it. Most support policies to address climate change. However, there are fossil fuel interests that are actively working to stall action, and climate change ranks near the bottom of most people’s priorities, far below security, the economy and jobs. The vast majority of our people are opposed to actions that place undue burden on our own economies, while developing nations continue to grow their emissions.

Opportunities

Fortunately, especially as renewable energy becomes more affordable, reducing emissions could improve public health, create jobs, and improve energy security.

National Action

At the climate negotiations in Paris, our nations pledged to reduce emissions by about 20% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. These pledges are ambitious but will be challenging to implement. For example, in the US, policies that were helping to reduce emissions are being repealed. Meanwhile, Australia, with large coal reserves, repealed its carbon emissions tax, and Russia and other former Soviet nations show little signs of moving away from their dependence on fossil fuels for government revenue.

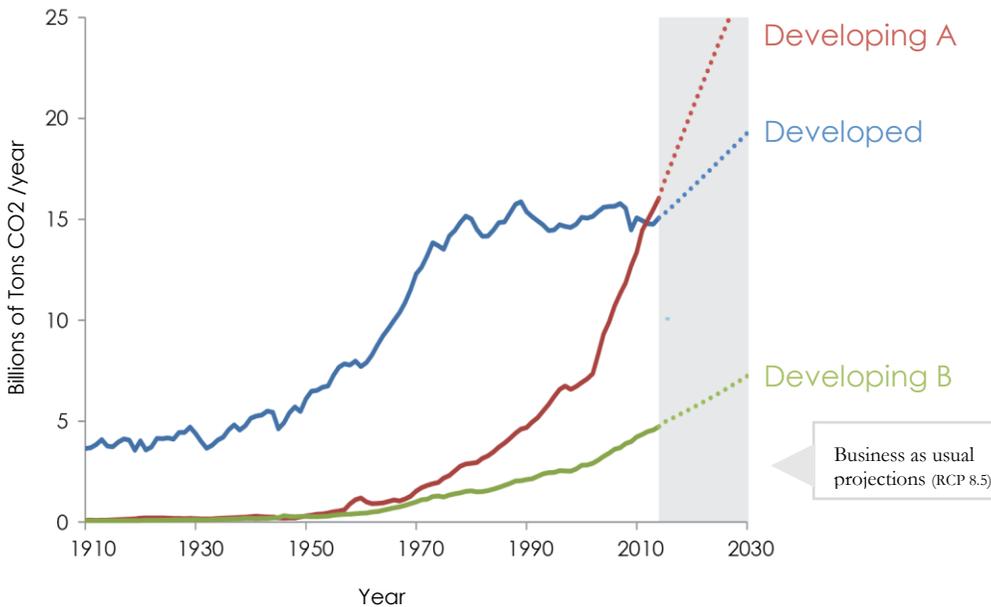
Forests and land use

Though we can pledge reductions in emissions from deforestation and land degradation (REDD) within our bloc, doing so would address only address a small portion of our emissions.

Global Landscape

- China now emits over 25% of global CO₂ emissions, more than the US, Mexico, and Canada combined, and has become the second largest economy. Emissions in India and other developing nations are also growing rapidly. Worse, the emissions of the developing nations have been growing faster than the rates assumed by climate scientists. Even with the pledges they submitted in Paris, the emissions of the Developing A and Developing B blocs are expected to grow by 16% and 40%, respectively, between 2015 and 2030.
- The less developed nations continue to emphasize that reductions in their emissions would require extensive financial assistance from developed countries, but corruption pervades many of these countries and financial assistance often fails to reach its intended use. They may also emphasize forestry policy over cutting fossil fuel emissions, which, while important, is insufficient for meeting the climate challenge.

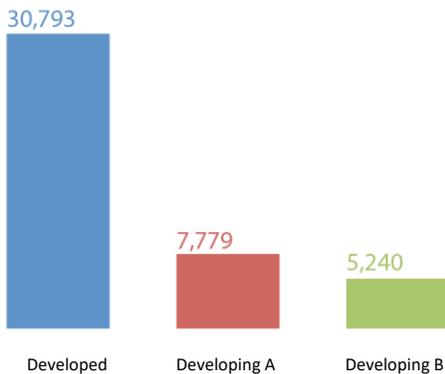
CO₂ Emissions from Fossil Fuels and Cement



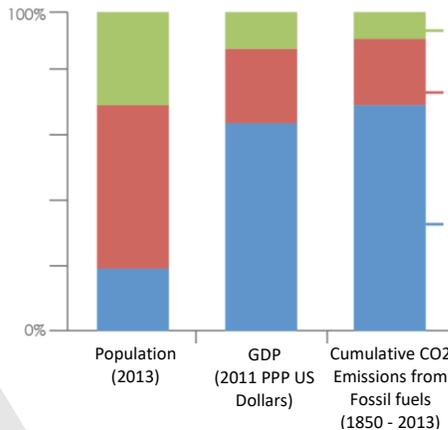
Developing A, including China, is now the world's largest emitter of CO₂. Without action, total CO₂ emissions from fossil fuels are projected to more than triple among the developing countries by 2100.

Sweden sustained annual emissions reductions of 4.5% to reduce their dependence on oil (1976-1986). France and Belgium saw similar reductions around this time. Otherwise, most significant historical emission reductions have come from financial or political crises. According to UNEP, a 3.5% annual reduction rate is extremely ambitious.

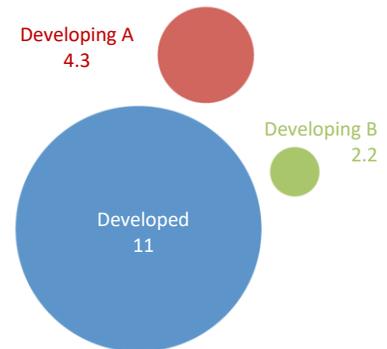
GDP per person (2011 PPP US Dollars)



Population Wealth and Cumulative Emissions



Emissions per person 2013 (tons CO₂ per year)



While cumulative emissions so far have been higher in the developed countries (i.e., the US, EU, and other developed countries), the growth of population, GDP per person, and emissions in the developing nations far outpaces growth in the developed countries. Under business-as-usual assumptions, cumulative emissions of all developed countries (US, EU, and other developed) are expected to fall to 37% of total by 2100.

Since 1980, emissions per person have risen dramatically in China and India (by 391% and 285%, respectively) but have fallen in the US and Europe (by 20% and 26%, respectively).